

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

CASE NO.: 1:20-CR-183-

v.

HON. ROBERT J. JONKER

TY GERARD GARBIN,

Defendant.

ATTACHMENT C - Report from Parents for Peace



TO: Mark A. Satawa in RE: Ty Garbin Case

Date: August 16, 2021

Parents For Peace (P4P) is a registered not-for-profit organization that was established by an alliance of parents of extremists, former extremists, survivors of extremism, researchers, and clinicians who have significant experience and deep conviction for compassionate deradicalization work from a trauma informed lens. Our mission is to ensure that families and communities today are educated and equipped with tools to be effective first responders to radicalization. P4P is an organization that deals with extremism that comes from all ideologies across the spectrum and we take a non-partisan approach to our efforts overall. Our team hails from different political, religious, cultural and other backgrounds, and the organization has been very involved at the highest levels of this endeavour. Over the past five years, PFP has assisted with hundreds of cases – successfully guiding the rescue and rehabilitation of individuals indoctrinated in a wide variety of extremist movements. PFP’s helpline is run by trained mental health counselors; operates with clear protocols for intervention and data-management; and has liability insurance.

This document is intended to be our submission to the Court, to consider Mr. Ty Garbin for a minimal custodial sentence, and contains the assessment of five P4P team members: Clinician and Executive Director Myrieme Churchill, Intake Specialist Emma Jouenne, Professor Mubin Shaikh, and US Army Veteran Chris Buckley, and Trauma Clinician Pardeep Kaleka. In our subsequent sections, we will explain who we are and what our experiences entail and how we aim to bring this all to bear on this case, in a holistic and focused manner.

Theory of Radicalization and Deradicalization of Violent Extremists

Our team at Parents for Peace proposes that the process of violent radicalization can be defined as, “a psychosocial process whereby an individual takes on increasingly extreme views, and which ends in violence or the attempt thereof.” We feel this definition stays well within the parameters established by other terrorism experts such as Borum¹, Schmid², and Bott et al³.

History has shown that extremism and terrorism are verifiable predictable historic phenomena that have been produced by human communities across time and beyond religious, cultural, racial, or other boundaries. At its foundation, the process can be said to stand on two major pillars. The first, relates to psychology specific to an individual, and which includes for consideration, a fuller picture of behavior throughout a person’s developmental stages, from childhood to present. The second pillar is how membership of an individual in a particular group generates in and out-group biases, and how these biases then impact on an individual’s decision-making process⁴.

In many cases it is not a neat nor tidy process. Due to it being as unique as the individual experiencing it, radicalization has been seen to be relatively fast in some people, and a long journey of engagement for others. With this understood, most experts⁵ accept that it is progressive process, sometimes linear but sometimes through issues that emerge suddenly in a person’s life, which overwhelm them and move them to action. Conditions such as life altering relationships, war, pandemics, death etc. Traumatic event or events that are beyond that particular individual or communities’ ability to cope with that distress.

It is beyond the scope of this report to entertain the lengthy academic debates on the precise

¹ Borum R. (2011). *Radicalization into violent extremism I: a review of social science theories*. J. Strategic Studies. 4, 7–36. 10.5038/1944-0472.4.4.1

² Schmid A. (2013). *Radicalisation, de-radicalisation, counter radicalisation: A conceptual discussion and literature review*. The Hague, the Netherlands: International Centre for Counter Terrorism.

³ Bott C., Castan W. J., Lark L., Thompson G. (2009). *Recruitment and radicalization of school-aged youth by international terrorist groups*. Arlington, VA: Homeland security Institute.

⁴ Taylor, M. (2010). *Is terrorism a group phenomenon?* Aggression and Violent Behavior. Volume 15, Issue 2, March–April 2010, Pages 121-129

⁵ Michael King & Donald M. Taylor (2011): *The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists: A Review of Theoretical Models and Social Psychological Evidence*, Terrorism and Political Violence, 23:4, 602-622



definitions of words such as “terrorism or “extremism” but Berger⁶ offers one for the latter; “Extremism is the belief that an in-group’s success or survival, can never be separated from the need for hostile action against an out-group.” We add the adjective “violent” to shift the point from belief to action itself. Hence, terrorism is a tactic, and extremism is a belief system.

In discussing the specifics of the radicalization process, it is important to know that most radicalized individuals, do not become violent. We understand that the effects of push and pull factors, will either relegate or escalate an individual’s violence. An easy way to understand this process,⁷ is to think of the game “Chutes & Ladders.” If the player lands on a ladder, it sends them further up the board and ahead in the game. If they land on a chute, they descend to a lower level of the board game. If we apply this to the radicalized individual in real life, the ladders are those push factors that are creating an escalation towards violence through a “defining moment” (sometimes also referred to as a “cognitive opening”⁸) and the chutes are the pull factors which relegate that violence towards non-violent means of problem solving.

There are two terms used to describe the process of an individual moving away from violent extremism: disengagement, and deradicalization⁹. The former can be defined as a behavioral shift in which the individual still retains extremist beliefs,¹⁰ but does not believe in using violence to achieve them¹¹. The latter relates to a full cognitive shift¹², in which a person renounces those beliefs, and which results in an automatic effect on behavior as well.

⁶ Berger, J. M. (2018). *Extremism*. Cambridge: The MIT Press

⁷ Grindrod, P & Sloggett, D. (2011). *From Grievance to Martyrdom: A Mathematical Perspective on the Journey of Radicalisation*. University of Reading.

⁸ Wiktorowicz Q. (2005). *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim extremism in the West*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

⁹ Horgan, J. (2008). *Deradicalization or Disengagement?* Perspectives of Terrorism, Vol. 2, Issue 4.

¹⁰ Demant F., Sloomman M., Buijs F., Tillie J. (2008). *Decline and disengagement: An analysis of processes of de-radicalisation*. Amsterdam: Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES).

¹¹ Butt R., Tuck H. (2012). *Tackling extremism: De-radicalisation and disengagement*. (Copenhagen: Conference Report, 8–9 May 2012), Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

¹² United Nations First report of the working group on radicalisation and extremism that lead to terrorism: Inventory of state programmes (2008). See also:



Assessment by Parents For Peace in the Matter of Mr. Ty Garbin

Our team conducted a series of interviews with Mr. Ty Garbin via Zoom from his detentional facility. The meetings took place July 7, July 14, and July 21, 2021. Our team also conducted an interview with Ty's parents, Mr. Scott Garbin and Ms. Aimee Pattenaude-Garbin on July 26, 2021. The interviews each lasted between 90-120 minutes, with an hour long debrief amongst the P4P team following each interview. Due to the sensitive nature of this case, we employed this team consulting model to ensure that our findings would be fair, impartial, and comprehensive for the court to consider as the sentencing phase of this case moves forward.

First and foremost, we would like to highlight that Ty has been very forthcoming and open about the details of his case and his involvement with the associates he was operating with prior to when he was taken into custody. We would also like to highlight how genuine he seems about wanting to help shed light on what these groups are involved with and how they are operating in the United States. This is a process that usually takes our team and intelligence months to achieve, information that may ultimately prove valuable towards preventing further targeted violence in the US.

At each of our sessions with Ty, his mental status and emotional functioning remained largely consistent. Ty's mood and affect were congruent, speech was clear and coherent, appearance and behavior were appropriate to the circumstances, and attitude was cooperative. His thought patterns remained stable and consistent from one session to the next. His narrative was also consistent from one session to the next and with that of his parents.

At our first session with Ty, July 7, 2021, we discussed his routine, conducted a family and relationship genome, and explored his childhood history. Ty stated that his routine is largely the same every day; wake up, read the Bible, work out, read other books, have dinner, speak to his parents and/or family, and then read again before bed. He explained to us his difficulties during childhood with reading and paying attention, but now that he is forced to sit still in custody, he described the enjoyment of reading and reflecting. He stated to us that, "this is the first time that



he has ever finished reading a complete book.” Then as we conducted an historical family genome, Ty described the verbal, emotional, and physical abuse that he, his mother, Aimee and sisters, Brianna and Marlaina endured from their biological father, Tim. Ty stated that from a very young age, he understood very clearly the difference between right and wrong, and the way that his father treated his mother and his family was wrong. He also stated that he felt the need to stand up for them and be a protective force in their lives. Ty finally stated that he was “happy” when his mother and biological father ultimately divorced and his stepfather Scott became a part of their lives. The family genome also describes a close relationship with his grandparents, Ann and Vincent. Ty graduated from high school in June of 2014 and began trade school at the age of 19. When he began trade school, he was working 8 hours a day and had a significant relationship with his partner Kaylus. During this time, Ty described difficulty in juggling all of his responsibilities and when him and Kaylus broke up, he wasn’t able to process the overwhelming feelings of anger, sadness, and loss so he just buried himself in more work and school. This led to sleeping difficulties as he was unable to find the time to process his emotions. Throughout this first session, it is clear that Ty engages in delayed processing of feelings as a coping mechanism when his sadness around childhood trauma and adulthood hurt are too overwhelming. As mentioned earlier, he stated that he had not fully read a book until he was incarcerated, and it is quite possible that he is only now processing past pain as he sits in detention.

Our second session with Ty took place on July 14, 2021, and we discussed Ty’s ideology and his involvement in the Wolverine Watchmen. He described being raised as a Roman Catholic but mentions that during his teenage years he saw the church as hypocritical. He would go on to describe his current day political ideology as Libertarian and seeing an accountable and limited government as optimal for the good of everyday people. His initial interest in the Wolverine Watchmen group was to be around like-minded people. The first meeting was in April 2020 and the conversations that took place according to Ty were on family, the Bible, and the preservation of “American values.” He names the leaders of the group to be “Joe” and “Pete”. Ty was tasked to run the online aspects of their group: social media, posts on group chats, etc. Shortly after the group started meeting in April, Joe and Pete presented the idea of “storming the Capital,” and asked every one of their thoughts. Ty stated that he opposed and thought that it was a bad idea and stated his opposition to the group leaders. Ty states that as the months followed, he was



asked for his expertise on technology and that “it felt good to be needed” but he had growing concern that the group was led by two “crazy men”, referring to Joe and Pete. Over the next few months, Ty became more and more conflicted over the activities of the group and his own involvement with the group. He now feels like the group took advantage of his mindset to be a protector and manipulated many of the ways in which he was used for expertise and resources.

The 3rd session took place on July 21, 2021. In this session we wanted to really gauge Ty’s commitment to change as his sentencing nears and his life moves forward. It is clear that his time incarcerated has made him deeply empathetic to others who are also incarcerated. As he described his work to help other inmates navigate some of the complexities of their cases, some of those who he described as “illiterate,” we could demonstrably listen to further examples where Ty feels the need to help. Ty notified us of his interest to go back to school and earn his paralegal degree so that he can continue the work that he started as he saw the plight of his fellow incarcerated cellmates. We concluded this session with Ty explaining how he is open to further counseling to process the emotions of the past which may include forgiving his biological father Tim, Kaylus, and the trauma of the case.

The 4th session that our team conducted was on July 26, 2021. We spoke with Aimee and Scott Garbin. During this session, we wanted to explore and qualify Ty’s understanding of his childhood, upbringing, and life. To note, was that Ty’s mother, Aimee, was very emotional and visibly sad during the entire session. Ty’s stepfather, Scott, was much more stoic, however opened up more and became much more emotional as the interview went on. Both were extremely supportive and forthcoming of information that they knew about and both clearly care for the wellbeing of Ty. Aimee confirmed that Ty’s childhood was extremely difficult because of his biological dad, Tim. She shared that Tim was abusive towards her, and that this also hurt Ty. Despite this, Ty tried to continue a distanced relationship with his biological father, only to come to the conclusion that Tim could never be the father that they all needed him to be, therefore by age 17 and 18, Scott adopted Ty. Despite the family’s best efforts, Ty was still clearly hurting. Aimee and Scott described Ty’s relationship with Kaylus as “unhealthy”. They stated that Kaylus wanted to change Ty. Aimee and Scott described Ty as a “good kid” and were shocked when they received news of his involvement in the plot to kidnap the Governor, and in this group



in general. As they spoke with Ty, they encouraged him to tell the truth to the court. Today, they both speak with Ty daily, Ty has a good relationship with his stepbrother Justin, Ty speaks with his sister Marlaina frequently, and his other sister Brianna is attempting to forgive him for what happened.

Summary of Findings

Throughout the sessions, it was clear that Ty engages in delayed processing. This is a normal subconscious coping mechanism, especially amongst men who have experienced overwhelming feelings of sadness, anger, and trauma surrounding their childhood. During the first session, Ty stated that he had not fully read a book until he was incarcerated, this affirms that he, like many of those that he now feels the need to advocate for, may have some sort of undiagnosed learning condition similar to the symptomology of ADD/ADHD. This combined with his trauma and the conditioning of manhood that he experienced would have made it difficult for Ty to navigate healthy relationships, healthy attachments, and healthy coping. When Ty tried to reach back out to his biological father Tim, he was met with even more rejection, therefore he didn't get the closure that one needs to grieve the loss of a biological father figure. Instead, what he learned was that his feelings will ultimately betray you. This would show up as Ty and Kaylus broke up and he buried himself into work and school. He was coping with that loss by keeping himself busy, not really sleeping, but also not processing his hurt around the loss of this relationship as well.

In understanding his childhood and his subsequent self-medicating, we offer this point as part of an explanation, that the trauma he went through in his developmental stages, set the stage for his radicalization journey through incremental defining moments/cognitive openings. Given the individual psychological makeup of Ty, we respectfully submit that it created vulnerabilities which led him to engage with an extremist ideology, especially in having the protector archetype that Ty does.

During the time that Ty got involved with the Wolverine Watchmen, we believe that there was still a lot of hurt and anger stemming from his childhood and relationship with Kaylus. However,



during the pandemic, he subconsciously, like many other with extreme forms of thinking, channeled those feelings into frustration; about the government and associated entities, and a changing America that is devoid of values that they hold dear. In short, his unprocessed personal feelings were exploited by this group and the pandemic. Him joining this group was his psyche attempting to make sense of the overwhelming emotions happening inside of him and the helplessness he felt from the pandemic. We liken this to substance abuse, where the ideology becomes the drug of choice. The need for identity, belonging, and purpose are the highs that one needs to make oneself feel good or feel like they have some semblance of control over their existence.

We also note that in our discussions with Ty that despite his doubts regarding his engagement with the group, he nonetheless remained present with the others. Disengagement and deradicalization are not instantaneous processes. We have observed in numerous client cases, as well as through the experiences of some of the former extremists on the P4P team itself, that the extrication process can be a lengthy one, filled with turmoil and second guessing, in which the process begins with having doubts about the goals and tactics of the group. This process usually includes concerns over consequences of the intended action, and finally, an internal decision of disengagement. But, walking away is not simple considering attachments and relationships that have been built up over time with the group. During this period, it can happen that a person goes through a full cognitive shift away from the ideology.

We also know that in some cases, incarceration without counseling support, can push an individual back into extremism especially where a person is showing signs of wanting to change but has no avenue to express it. Prisons can act as hotbeds for radicalization and can present a risk of further radicalization for impressionable and vulnerable individuals.

The PFP helpline received a significant increase in calls during the COVID-19 pandemic. Extremism has continued to be on the rise, and as more and more people were stuck at home, online and found their social networks broken, people turned to extremism. The pandemic represented one of those “cognitive openings” for Ty, and it presented a completely radical shift from the connections he had. The uncertainty surrounding this unknown virus acted as an incubator



for Ty, that caused him to escalate his frustration and grievances. In this journey of radicalization to violence, a collection of these environmental disturbances creates that perfect storm from which movement towards violence becomes a consideration by the radicalized individual.

Currently, he is attempting to make sense of his life and reestablish relationships with his family and old friend circles, this is a very positive sign of commitment to change for the better. Again, we believe that he wants to take accountability for his actions and is cooperating with the Government to ensure that justice be served in this case. He has plead guilty, and Ty is of the mind that if you do something wrong, then you fess up to it. He has been hurt by people who have not reciprocated this value system to him. As the court moves forward in sentencing, we encourage the court to keep in mind that we are at a crossroads to either furthering the harm or healing the harm. Parents for Peace encourages you to heal and we welcome the opportunity to help the court and Ty move forward.

As we move forward in this case, we make the following recommendations;

- 1) Mr. Garbin to be engaged in psychotherapy to help him learn from his past behavior but also help him develop social skills and understand his choices and their consequences.
- 2) Be sentenced to a minimal custodial sentence, followed by close community supervision for as long as the court sees fit.
- 3) We recommend that Parents for Peace provides guidance to his family to empower them on how to help Mr. Garbin maintain healthy choices and prevent him to get into extreme believes.
- 4) To engage on the Parents for Peace T.R.P. program that provides rehabilitation and prevention to extremism.

Objective and Goals of the T.R.P:

The Trauma and Recovery Program (T.R.P.) utilizes a Moral Cognizant approach to understanding, identifying, and coping with stress and Trauma as to avoid bias and polarization. By way of a practitioner approach through critical self-reflection we facilitate individuals to identify, isolate, and recover from any stress and/or



Trauma they encounter in their profession.

The goal of T.R.P is to provide participants with positive coping tools, resources, and exercises to maintain a balanced and healthy lifestyle as to not lead individuals toward violent radicalization and/or any negative overvalued belief systems and to provide tools to individuals wanting to exit a radicalized lifestyle.

